INDIA BANS IMPORT OF DRONES

Relevant for: Science & Technology | Topic: Defence related developments

In order to promote domestic drone industry, the India on Wednesday banned the import of drones with immediate effect.

The move comes over a week after the Union Budget proposed the Drone Shakti scheme to facilitate application and use of 'drones as service' in the country.

 However the import of drones for R&D , defence, and security purposes would be allowed, but with due clearance, according to the notification issued by the Directorate General of Foreign Trade (DGFT) on late Wednesday evening.

Besides, the import of drone components will not require any approvals. It is aimed to help the domestic drone manufacturing.

"Import policy of drones in... under HS code 8806 is 'Prohibited' with exceptions provided for R&D, Defence and Security purposes. Import of drone components shall be 'Free'. This shall come into force with immediate effect," said the notification.

Union Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman had in the Budget for 2022-23 said that startups will be promoted to facilitate Drone Shakti through varied applications and for DRaaS. Also, in select ITIs, in all states, the required courses for skilling will be started.

In September 2021, India had approved a PLI scheme for manufacturing drones and drone components in the country

The Union Budget has also proposed the use of drones in spraying of insecticides and nutrients, and crop assessment, to help the farm community.

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